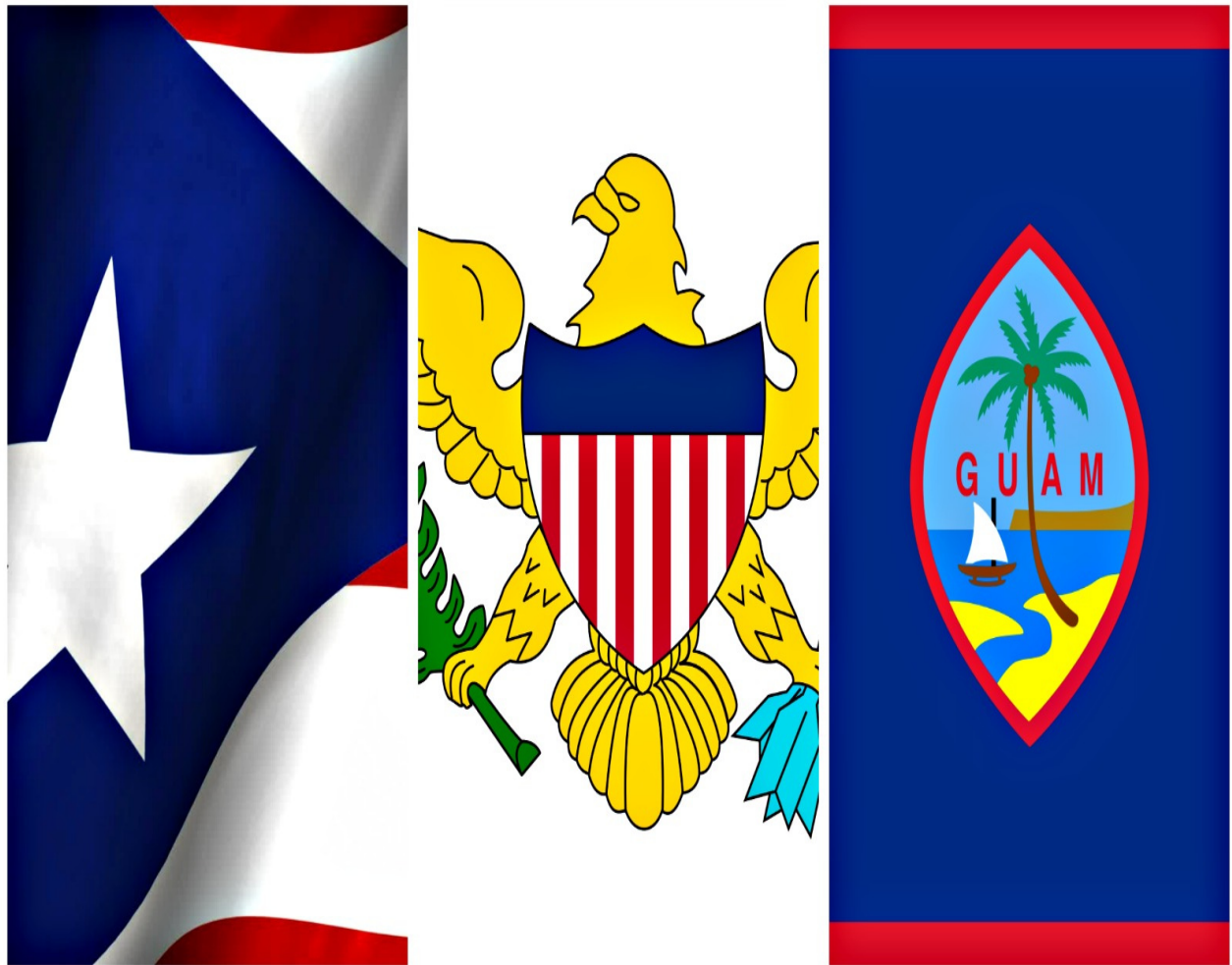


The Virgin Islands Consortium

U.S. Territory Residents File Voting Rights Federal Lawsuit

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ST. CROIX -- Six citizens from three territories owned by the United States of America -- the U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico and Guam -- have filed a lawsuit that, if successful, would see residents from the respective territories having the right to vote for the president of the United States, according to language in a [recently filed lawsuit](#). Luis Segovia, a Guam native, is the lead plaintiff.

Mr. Segovia served an 18-month tour in Iraq and a 12-month tour in Afghanistan with the Illinois National Guard, and a 10-month tour in Afghanistan as part of the Guam National Guard. But because he lives in Guam, the soldier is unable vote for president.

Virgin Islands Delegate to Congress Stacey Plaskett, at Veterans Day celebrations in Frederiksted on Wednesday, announced that her office joined the effort because the disenfranchisement of residents in U.S. territories has gone on for far too long.

“Virgin Islanders have long been among the first to answer the call of duty — in some cases even in defense of this nation before we were a part of it,” Mrs. Plaskett said. “Yet today, as our men and women deploy and engage in theater, they cannot vote for their commander-in-chief, who ultimately makes the decision to send them there.”

There are roughly 4.7 million U.S. citizens living in the territories. According to [The Huffington Post](#), that's a population greater than nearly half the states, and larger than the five smallest states combined. And while the territories are allowed to vote in primaries -- many presidential candidates have campaigned heavily in Puerto Rico -- they won't be allowed to participate in the general election.

"It's hard to be treated like I am good enough to risk my life defending democracy, but not good enough to vote for my commander-in- chief," said Mr. Segovia, according to [Kuam](#), a Guam online newspaper. Mr. Segovia is a staff sergeant in the Guam National Guard and also serves in the Civilian Security Forces for the U.S. Navy.

The lawsuit, filed on Wednesday, is part of a broader effort by We The People Project, with an ultimate goal of assuring equal rights for U.S. residents living in the territories.